



DES MOINES, WASHINGTON CITY MANAGER

THE COMMUNITY

With its sweeping view of the snowcapped Olympic Mountains to the west and majestic Mount Rainier to the southeast, Des Moines, Washington, truly offers the best of the Pacific Northwest and is an amazing place to call home. Nestled conveniently between the cities of Seattle and Tacoma, on the eastern shore of Puget Sound, “The Waterland City” has a population of 30,100, covers over six square miles, and is just a short drive from Sea-Tac International Airport and Interstate 5.

Located in King County, Des Moines is part of a greater metro area with a population of 3.5 million. Rich in history, diversity, and natural beauty, this charming coastal community is proud of the local character that has been shaped by its varied and unique businesses and abundant natural resources.

Des Moines is a city of pioneers, starting with John Moore, who was granted the first Des Moines homestead claim in 1872. By 1890, the Des Moines News would describe the community as “The best and most prosperous city on Puget Sound.” Called “Des Moines” after the Des Moines City Improvement Company, which was named after Des Moines, Iowa, where many of the city’s early settlers were from, the city was incorporated in 1959.

Des Moines provides a business-friendly environment and continually seeks new economic development and revitalization opportunities, with a strong focus on business attraction and retention. Bold economic development plans are diversifying the city’s employment base and strategically positioning Des Moines for the future. Its central location, supply chain access via the Green River Valley, affordable properties, and well-trained workforce make the community an appealing place to do business. Major employers in the area include Highline School District, Highline College, Wesley Homes, Judson Park, and Greencore Group, a new manufacturer of fresh and frozen food to-go products.

There are several major development projects underway. The Des Moines Creek Business Park, located on 89 acres of Port Seattle property, is currently under development and will be home to the FAA’s regional offices. Three buildings on the northern portion of the site are nearing completion and the middle third of the development is 75% pre-leased with building permit applications expected by the end of March. The Des Moines Theater in the Marina District is being completely rehabilitated and enhanced with additional living units and commerce space.

Housing in Des Moines is comprised of distinct neighborhoods with a wide array of housing options for every income level. There are several unbuilt subdivisions, totaling 150-200 building lots expected to begin construction this summer. Several medium sized to large multi-family projects are in various stages of development, including a 119-unit senior housing project, an 87-unit mixed-use building, and a 350-unit apartment project in Pacific Ridge. The Highline Place mixed-use project on Pacific Highway, adjacent to Highline College, will add additional housing options and office space.

With mild seasons that provide an occasional snow day in the winter and summer temperatures that rarely exceed 90 degrees, Des Moines’ residents enjoy a variety of recreational and cultural amenities year-round, with easy access to additional amenities in surrounding cities.

The community has five miles of shoreline on Puget Sound and four public waterfront areas that draw regional tourism. Des Moines’ 850-slip marina, the only public marina between Seattle and Tacoma, is located next to the small-town shopping district, which offers locally-owned specialty shops and restaurants.

Beautifully maintained City and County parks dot the area, including the 18-acre Des Moines Beach Park, a National Historic landmark. The Parks, Recreation and Senior Services Department provides a variety of programs and services for the whole family, from sports programs and after-school camps, to fitness programs and facilities and cultural events. Cyclists and joggers enjoy the Des Moines Creek Trail, a quiet, wooded two-mile leg of the Sound to Lake Trail System. Sailing, boating, fishing, and beach exploration are popular pastimes and skiing, snowboarding, and snowshoeing are only an hour’s drive away.



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THE COMMUNITY, continued

The City hosts several annual festivals including Fireworks Over Des Moines and Beach Park Summer Concerts. The popular Waterland Festival is sponsored by Destination Des Moines and the Poverty Bay Wine Festival and Poverty Bay Blues and Brews Festival are sponsored by the Des Moines-Normandy Park Rotary Club. The City's Art Commission sponsors a number of annual events including Shakespeare in the Park, an Arts Gala, and the Art on Poverty Bay Sculpture program. Every Saturday from June through October, the marina's Waterfront Farmers Market presents creations from local artists and fresh flowers, produce, meats, and cheeses from local farmers.

Highline School District provides quality education opportunities to over 19,000 K-12 students on seven campuses. Ethnic diversity and success characterize the local academic climate. There are four new school buildings, including Mt. Rainier High School, a state-of-the-art facility complete with multiple gymnasiums and the latest computer technology, as well as the acclaimed International Baccalaureate program. Parkside Elementary, at the south end of the City, is home to the District's "Challenge Program" for top young scholars. There are also several faith-based private schools in the area, including Evergreen Lutheran, Holy Trinity Lutheran, and St. Philomena.

For those seeking higher education, highly acclaimed Highline College has its 80-acre main campus in Des Moines and serves nearly 19,000 students. Highline's Marine Science and Technology Center is located at Redondo Beach. Highline provides a terrific talent pool for employers and tailors specific training programs to current business needs. Central Washington University also has a campus located at Highline College. A partnership between the schools allows students to take classes from both Highline and CWU concurrently, with both bachelor's and master's degree programs available. Additional colleges and universities located nearby in Seattle and Tacoma include the University of Washington, Seattle University, Seattle Pacific University, the University of Puget Sound, Pacific Lutheran University, and the University of Washington-Tacoma.

The City of Des Moines has a median household income of \$59,799 and an average home value of \$289,100. The City's ad valorem tax rate is \$1.60 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

GOVERNANCE & ORGANIZATION

The City operates under a Council-Manager form of governance. The City Council is comprised of the Mayor and six City Council members, all elected at-large and serving four-year terms. The Council appoints a professional City Manager to oversee the day-to-day operations of the organization. The City has an annual budget of \$50.5 million and a staff of 127 full-time and 55 part-time/seasonal employees.

The City Manager is responsible for the efficient operation of municipal services, personnel administration, budget development and control, and the enforcement of City laws and ordinances. The Police Chief, Assistant City Manager/Economic Development Director, Planning, Building & Public Works Director, City Attorney, Harbormaster, Finance Director, Parks, Recreation & Senior Services Director, and Human Resources Manager report to the City Manager.

The City has received many awards for public works projects, planning efforts, and interlocal projects in recent years. Des Moines was one of seven cities to receive two awards for the development and construction of the SCORE correctional facility: Program Excellence Award for Community Partnerships from ICMA and Municipal Excellence Award from the Association of Washington Cities. The City also received the King County Executive's John D. Spellman Historic Preservation Award for the Des Moines Beach Park Dining Hall in 2015, and the Des Moines Beach Park Auditorium in 2013.



CITY COUNCIL MISSION STATEMENT

We protect, preserve, promote, and improve the community by providing leadership and services reflecting the pride and values of Des Moines citizens.

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LEADERSHIP & INNOVATION

The City of Des Moines seeks to expand its economic base and deploy assets sustainably. Developing a well-crafted Economic Development Strategic Plan to outline viable approaches and guidelines for job creation, small business development, business retention and attraction, marketing/branding, and increased tourism is a key priority. The successful candidate will have the proven experience to oversee the development of the Economic Development Strategic Plan and help this rapidly developing community achieve its economic goals, while ensuring that the needs and expectations of its increasingly diverse citizenry are being met.

The next City Manager will also work closely with the City Council to address the following strategic objectives:

- Aggressively remediate nuisance properties
- Implement and practice the City's Emergency Management Plan
- Finalize and begin implementation of a Marina Beach Park and Redondo Business Plan
- Create and implement a financial sustainability plan for the Marina, including a public input process
- Ensure that infrastructure is in place to support Marina District development
- Aggressively pursue alternative revenue sources, including restoration of the state's Sales Tax Equalization program
- Increase opportunities to recognize community members/organizations and City staff
- Review and modify regulations along commercial corridors
- Develop and implement a written, measurable communications plan
- Continue and enhance the City's collaboration with the Educational Communities
- Pursue mass transit and other multi-modal transportation options and work with neighboring cities, Highline College, and Sound Transit to develop the best Link Light Rail alternative and connecting services for Des Moines
- Continue to support development opportunities on Port of Seattle-owned property in Des Moines
- Support on-going programs to improve public safety
- Maintain the Police Department's accreditation
- Develop a comprehensive facilities, infrastructure, and technology replacement and maintenance plan to include collaboration with other community partners/entities
- Continue to educate the business and development community on City process improvement and innovations

IDEAL CANDIDATE

The new City Manager should be a creative, innovative, and collaborative leader with the ability to strategically think outside-the-box. The City desires an enthusiastic and dynamic public servant who will be visible in the community and encourage citizen engagement. A strong communicator with excellent interpersonal skills, the City Manager must be able to effectively and confidently communicate policies, plans, and other pertinent information to all levels within the organization and the community.

The next City Manager will be a skilled negotiator who can address and resolve complex issues with tact and diplomacy and identify and respond to community and organizational issues in a timely manner. A politically astute consensus-builder, the City Manager will deal constructively with conflict through discussion, persuasion, and negotiation, and be able to facilitate collaboration across departments. It will be important for the new City Manager to build organizational trust to ensure positive working relationships throughout the organization. The selected individual will be able to delegate with authority and clarity, engage staff by instilling a shared sense of purpose, set measurable goals, and foster a culture of transparency and accountability.

A strong, visionary leader who is not afraid of a challenge, the successful candidate will be able to adapt easily to change, exercise sound judgment at all times, and make evidence-based decisions that support goals and objectives. The City Manager will continually work toward process improvement to maximize employee and financial resources and constantly evaluate new service delivery methods and techniques. Knowledge of constant process improvement methodology and its applications is highly desired.



VISION STATEMENT

An inviting, livable, safe waterfront community embracing change for the future while preserving our past.

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IDEAL CANDIDATE, continued

The chosen candidate will be experienced in local government and public administration and possess an extensive knowledge of fiscal planning, budget preparation, policy development and implementation, and program development and administration. Experience with economic development, strategic planning, and labor negotiations is preferred.

EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

This position requires a bachelor's degree in public administration, business administration, or a related field and 10 years of progressively responsible experience in municipal government, including five years as a city manager, assistant city manager, or department head. A master's degree in public administration or a related field is preferred. An equivalent combination of education and experience may also be considered.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

The City of Des Moines offers a competitive salary commensurate with qualifications and experience. The City Manager has the option of participating in the Washington State Department of Retirement Systems Public Employee Retirement System (PERS). In lieu of Social Security, the City contributes 5.0% to the employee's 401(a) plan, with the employee contributing 6.2%. The City also contributes 1.52% to the employee's 457 plan and employees may make additional contributions. Vesting for the City's 401(a) contributions starts at 25% after two years, growing to 100% vested after five years of service. The City participates in medical plans through the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) and employees have a choice of four different medical plans. The City also offers dental, vision, life insurance, long-term disability insurance, and leave benefits.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Please apply online at: <http://bit.ly/SGRCurrentSearches>

For more information on this position contact:

Ron Holifield, CEO
Strategic Government Resources
Ron@GovernmentResource.com
214-676-1691

The City of Des Moines is an Equal Opportunity Employer and values diversity in its workforce. Applicants selected as finalists for this position will be subject to a comprehensive background check.

RESOURCES

City of Des Moines, WA
www.desmoineswa.gov

Seattle Southside Regional Tourism Authority
www.seattlesouthside.com

King County
www.kingcounty.gov

Destination Des Moines
www.destinationdesmoines.org

Waterland Blog
waterlandblog.com

City of Des Moines 2015 Comprehensive Plan
<http://www.desmoineswa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2091>

